

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for redundant image encoding, the apparatus comprising:

a slice modeling unit which divides image data of an image into a plurality of regions and determines which of the regions are to be redundantly encoded, and determines ~~structures~~ a structure for each of a plurality of slices to be used in encoding [[an]] the regions of the image and predetermined regions to be redundantly encoded so that image data of each predetermined region of the image to be redundantly encoded is contained in a plurality of slices;

a slice allocation unit which allocates ~~image data of each region of the image to at least one of the plurality of slices~~ according to the slice structures, wherein the slice allocation unit allocates each of the regions to be redundantly encoded to more than one of the slices;

a picture header encoding unit which encodes picture header information comprising information required to decode ~~the plurality of encoded slices and generates picture header information of the image;~~ and

a slice encoding unit which encodes the allocated image in units of regions into encoded slices according to the picture header information, wherein the slice encoding unit encodes the regions allocated to be redundantly encoded into more than one encoded slice.

2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice modeling unit ~~forms the slices in units of~~ determines that each slice structure comprises a series of macroblocks.

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice modeling unit divides the image into at least one rectangular first region and a second region and determines the structures of the slices so that each of the first and second regions is included in at least one independent slice.

4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice modeling unit ~~forms the slices in units of~~ determines that each slice structure comprises a set of macroblocks at certain positions of the image.

5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice modeling unit determines the structures of the slices in which the image data will be ~~included~~ encoded to be identical structures.

6. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice modeling unit determines the structures of the slices in which the image data will be ~~included~~ encoded to be a ~~plurality of~~ non-identical structures.

7. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice modeling unit determines the regions to be redundantly encoded based on regions predetermined by a user as being important regions from the image.

8. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice modeling unit determines the regions to be redundantly encoded by detecting regions where motions are actively performed, from the image.

9. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice modeling unit determines an amount of ~~each region~~ the regions to be redundantly encoded according to an error rate and a transmission bandwidth which occur in a transmission environment of the encoded slices, and an encoding efficiency of the slice encoding unit.

10. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice modeling unit comprises:

a slice structure modeling portion which determines the structures of the plurality of slices to be used for image encoding; and

a redundant encoding modeling portion which determines positions and amount of the regions to be redundantly encoded from the image using the plurality of slices.

11. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice allocation unit determines sizes of the plurality of slices according to an amount of the regions to be redundantly encoded.

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice allocation unit allocates the image data to the plurality of slices so that each of the slices includes image data of the regions to be redundantly encoded and image data of regions not to be redundantly encoded.

13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice allocation unit allocates the image data to the plurality of slices so that at least one slice includes image data of only a region to be redundantly encoded.

14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the picture header encoding unit encodes the picture header information containing structure, position, and size of each slice.

15. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice encoding unit comprises:

a slice header encoding portion which generates for each of the slices a slice header ~~containing~~ comprising information used to encode ~~macroblock in~~ macroblocks of the slice according to the picture header information;

a temporal/spatial predictive encoding portion which ~~performs~~ temporal/spatial ~~predictive encoding~~ predictively encodes the allocated image regions in units of into the encoded slices of the image;

a transform quantization portion which transforms the temporal/spatial predictively-encoded data slices into a frequency domain and quantizes ~~the data of~~ the transformed slices; and

an entropy-encoding portion which entropy-encodes the quantized data.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the slice header includes flag information which indicates whether the slice to be encoded includes only regions to be redundantly encoded.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice encoding unit quantizes ~~and encodes each of the slices in which the regions to be redundantly encoded are included,~~ each of the redundantly-encoded slices at different quantization intervals.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice encoding unit encodes only main information containing a macroblock header and a motion vector of the regions to be redundantly encoded in a first slice and encodes all information of the regions to be redundantly encoded in a second slice among two slices including the image data of the region to be redundantly encoded.

20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slice encoding unit encodes only main information containing a macroblock header, a motion vector, and a discrete cosine (DC) coefficient contained in a discrete cosine transform (DCT) coefficient of the regions to be redundantly encoded in a first slice and encodes all information of the regions to be redundantly encoded in a second

slice among two slices including the image data of the regions to be redundantly encoded.

21. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for redundant image decoding, the apparatus comprising:

a picture header decoding unit which decodes picture header information ~~containing structures, positions, and sizes of slices in a bitstream where image data are encoded~~ comprising information required to decode encoded slices of an image divided into a plurality of regions, wherein at least one of the encoded image slices corresponds to each region of the image, and wherein a plurality of the encoded image slices corresponds to a redundantly encoded region of the image;

a slice construction unit which determines the structures and positions of a ~~plurality of the encoded image~~ slices to be decoded according to the decoded picture header information;

a slice decoding unit which decodes ~~an~~ the encoded image ~~in units of slices~~ according to the decoded picture header information; and

an image construction unit which disposes image data of each ~~the~~ decoded slice ~~image~~ according to the determined structure and position of the slices ~~determined by the slice construction unit~~ and restores and outputs ~~the~~ a decoded image;

~~wherein redundantly encoded predetermined regions of at least two slices of the plurality of slices constructed by the slice construction unit are overlapped on each other.~~

22. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the slice decoding unit comprises:

an entropy-decoding portion which entropy-decodes the ~~bitstream in units of~~ encoded image slices according to the position and size information of the slices decoded from the picture header information;

an inverse-transform quantization portion which performs inverse-quantization of the entropy-decoded image data slices, performs inverse-transform of the inversely-quantized image data into a temporal domain, and generates temporal/spatial predictively-encoded image data; and

an image restoration portion which restores the image by compensating the temporal/spatial predictively-encoded image data.

23. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein, when the decoded picture header information ~~which indicates that a corresponding for an encoded image slice is composed of~~ indicates that the encoded image slice only corresponds to redundantly-encoded regions ~~is contained in a header of the slice of the image~~, the slice decoding unit decodes the encoded image slice composed of only that only corresponds to the redundantly-encoded regions only if errors occur in decoding another decoded slice including one of the plurality of encoded image slices that corresponds only to the redundantly-encoded regions.

24. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~[[21]]~~23, wherein, when errors occur in decoding an encoded image slice that corresponds to a redundantly-encoded region ~~during image decoding~~, the image construction unit constructs the

decoded image using the image data decoded from another slice including the image data of one of the plurality of encoded image slices that corresponds to the redundantly-encoded region.

25. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 22, wherein, when errors do not occur ~~in all of redundantly-decoded regions~~ when decoding the plurality of encoded image slices that correspond to a redundantly-encoded region, the image construction unit constructs the decoded image using the regions-decoded image data decoded from one of the encoded image slices that corresponds to the redundantly-encoded region which was encoded with a smallest quantization interval.

26. (Currently Amended) A method for redundantly encoding an image, the method comprising:

(a) dividing image data of an image into a plurality of regions and determining which of the regions are to be redundantly encoded, and determining structures of each of a plurality of slices to be used in encoding the regions of the image and ~~predetermined regions to be redundantly encoded so that image data of each predetermined region of the image to be redundantly encoded is contained in a plurality of slices;~~

(b) ~~allocating image data of each region of [[an]] the image to~~ at least one of the plurality of slices according to the slice structures, wherein each of the regions to be redundantly encoded is allocated to more than one of the slices;

(c) encoding picture header information comprising information required to decode ~~the plurality of encoded slices and generating picture header information of~~ the image; and

(d) encoding the allocated image ~~in units of~~ regions into encoded slices according to the picture header information, wherein the regions allocated to be redundantly encoded are encoded into more than one encoded slice.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein in (a), ~~the slices are composed in units of~~ each slice structure comprises a series of macroblocks.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein in (a), the image is divided into at least one first rectangular region and a second region, and the structures of the slices are determined so that each of the first and second regions is included in at least one independent slice.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein in (a), ~~the slices are composed of~~ each slice structure comprises a set of macroblocks at certain positions of the image.

30. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein in (a), the structures of the slices in which the image data will be included encoded are determined to be identical structures.

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein in (a), the structures of the slices in which the image data will be ~~included~~ encoded are determined to be ~~a plurality of~~ non-identical structures.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein in (a), regions, predetermined by a user as an important region from the image, are determined as the regions to be redundantly encoded.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein in (a), the regions to be redundantly encoded are determined by detecting regions where motions are actively performed, from the image.

34. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein in (a), an amount of ~~each region~~ of the regions to be redundantly encoded is determined according to an error rate and a transmission bandwidth which occur in a transmission environment of the encoded slices, and an encoding efficiency of an encoder for encoding the slices.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein (a) comprises:

determining the structures of the plurality of slices to be used for image encoding; and

determining positions and amount of the regions to be redundantly encoded from the image using the plurality of slices.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein in (b), sizes of the plurality of slices are determined according to an amount of the regions to be redundantly encoded.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein in (b), the image data are allocated to the slices so that each of the slices includes image data of the regions to be redundantly encoded and image data of regions not to be redundantly encoded.

38. (Original) The method of claim 26, wherein in (b), the image data are allocated to the slices so that at least one slice includes image data of only a region to be redundantly encoded.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein in (c), the picture header information containing structure, position, and size of each slice is encoded.

40. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein (d) comprises:
generating for each of the slices a slice header ~~containing~~ comprising
information used to encode ~~a macroblock in~~ macroblocks of the slice according to
the picture header information;
~~performing~~ temporal/spatial predictive ~~predictively~~ encoding the allocated
image regions in units of into the encoded slices of the image;

transforming the temporal/spatial predictively-encoded data slices into a frequency domain and quantizing the data of the transformed slices; and entropy-encoding the quantized data.

41. (Original) The method of claim 40, wherein the slice header includes flag information which indicates whether the slice to be encoded includes only regions to be redundantly encoded.

42. (Canceled)

43. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein in (d), each of the redundantly-encoded slices ~~in which the regions to be redundantly encoded are included~~ is quantized and encoded at different quantization intervals.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein in (d), among two slices including the image data of the regions to be redundantly encoded, only main information containing a macroblock header and a motion vector of the regions to be redundantly encoded is encoded in a first slice, and all information of the regions to be redundantly encoded are encoded in a second slice.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein in (d), among two slices including the image data of the regions to be redundantly encoded, only main information containing a macroblock header, a motion vector, and a discrete cosine (DC) coefficient contained in a discrete cosine transform (DCT) coefficient of

the regions to be redundantly encoded is encoded in a first slice, and all information of the regions to be redundantly encoded are encoded in a second slice.

46. (Currently Amended) A method for redundant image decoding, the method comprising:

(a) decoding picture header information including ~~structures, positions, and sizes of slices in a bitstream where image data are encoded~~ information required to decode encoded slices of an image divided into a plurality of regions, wherein at least one of the encoded image slices corresponds to each region of the image, and wherein a plurality of the encoded image slices corresponds to a redundantly encoded region of the image;

(b) determining ~~the~~ structures and positions of ~~a plurality of~~ the encoded image slices to be decoded according to the decoded picture header information;

(c) decoding ~~[[an]]~~ the encoded image ~~in units of~~ slices according to the decoded picture header information; and

(d) disposing image data of each ~~the~~ decoded slice image according to the structure and position of the slices determined in (b) and restoring and outputting ~~the~~ a decoded image;

~~wherein redundantly encoded predetermined regions of at least two slices of the plurality of slices constructed in (b) are overlapped on each other.~~

47. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 46, wherein (c) comprises:
entropy-decoding the ~~bitstream in units of~~ encoded image slices according to
the position and size information of the slices decoded from the picture header
information;

performing inverse-quantization of the entropy-decoded image ~~data~~ slices,
performing inverse-transform of the inversely-quantized image data into a temporal
domain, and generating temporal/spatial predictively-encoded image data; and
restoring the image by compensating the temporal/spatial predictively-
encoded image data.

48. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 46, wherein in (c), when the
decoded picture header information ~~which indicates that a corresponding for an~~
encoded image slice ~~is composed of~~ indicates that the encoded image slice only
corresponds to redundantly-encoded regions ~~is included in a header of the slice of~~
the image, the encoded image slice ~~composed of only that only corresponds to~~ the
redundantly-encoded regions ~~are~~ is decoded only if errors occur in decoding another
~~decoded slice including one of the plurality of encoded image slices that corresponds~~
only to the redundantly-encoded regions.

49. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[46]]~~48, wherein in (d),
when errors occur in decoding an encoded image slice that corresponds to a
redundantly-encoded region ~~during image decoding~~, the image is restored using the
image data decoded from another one of the plurality of encoded image slices that
corresponds to ~~slice including the~~ redundantly-encoded region.

50. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 46, wherein in (d), when errors do not occur ~~in all of redundantly-decoded regions~~ when decoding the plurality of encoded image slices that correspond to a redundantly-encoded region, the image is restored using the ~~regions-decoded~~ image data decoded from one of the encoded image slices that corresponds to the redundantly-encoded region which was encoded with a smallest quantization interval.

51. (Previously Presented) A computer readable medium encoded with a computer program comprising computer-executable instructions for executing the method for redundant image encoding of claim 26.

52. (Previously Presented) A computer readable medium encoded with a computer program comprising computer-executable instructions for executing the method for redundant image decoding of claim 46.